






Strong Beginnings Start With School Readiness

Helping children succeed in school means more than packing lunches, filling backpacks and getting them to the bus on time. In fact, the task of helping kids succeed in school starts prenatally.



At First 5 California, school readiness means ensuring all young children enter school physically, socially and emotionally ready to succeed in school and life. It also means ensuring early care and education providers, such as preschools, child care centers and family child care providers, are working together to help prepare children for that success.

Accomplishments to Date: Getting Ready for School

-  First 5 California has more than 206 School Readiness programs available reaching families who need them most; more than 60 percent of the programs serve bilingual and bicultural needs.
-  In 2005-2006, more than 220,000 parents and 311,000 children attended family literacy programs.
-  First 5 California has administered more than 750,000 comprehensive health screenings, nearly 500,000 immunizations and more than 1.2 million nutrition assessments and education services since 1998.



Two-thirds of children entering kindergarten in the state's high-priority schools don't have the developmental skills necessary for school success. First 5 California and County Commissions are investing more than \$800 million over eight years toward School Readiness programs that will help prepare more kids for success.

-  All 58 County Commissions engage in School Readiness activities so all children statewide have the opportunity to enter school healthy and learning.
-  School Readiness programs are located in the neighborhoods that need them most, providing access to family literacy programs, health care, early learning programs, parenting education and other resources for families with children ages 0 to 5.

"I've learned how to be her teacher, in addition to being her mom. It's been helpful to know that even though I can't get her into a preschool that I can be her teacher."

– Justine, First 5 parent in Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters program